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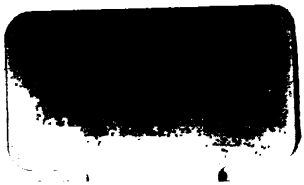

Manuals of the Science and Art of Teaching

FIRST SERIES—No. V.

# CLASS TEACHING

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*These Manuals, with the exception of the last of each series, have been written, at the request of the Literature Committee of the National Society, by men distinguished at their several Universities, and possessed of large experience either as teachers or examiners. The last of each series, that on Class Teaching and that on Apparatus, is the work in each case of a Lecturer on Method at one of the larger Training Colleges.*

*The writers have endeavoured in each case to connect the practice of teaching with the fundamental principles on which it should rest, and to bear in mind the capacities and needs of the particular class of readers for which these Manuals are specially intended. The chapters have been broken up into short paragraphs, with conspicuous headings, and simplicity of language has been uniformly aimed at.*

*In order to obtain greater clearness and precision, and to save cross-references from one Manual to another, each subject has been treated independently, and is complete in itself. This independence of authorship has necessarily caused some repetition of matter, but it will be seen that this slight addition to the bulk of the whole has largely contributed to the definiteness and completeness of the separate parts.*

# CLASS TEACHING.

## CHAPTER I.

### SCOPE OF THE SUBJECT.

1. A CLASS is a number of children, of similar standing and attainment, grouped for common work. It is a group that may receive definite and systematic instruction; instruction in which the lessons are so arranged that one prepares for that which follows, and in which, therefore, the later ones all grow out of the earlier. The advantages of class instruction are manifold. The class saves time. Twenty may be instructed in the same time as would be required for one. It thus sets the teacher free for other work. But it has greater advantages. Look at its forces. These are sympathy, emulation, and competition. The brighter ones are there to stimulate the dull. The special knowledge of some is made a common possession. And even the instruction of the dull, involving as it does the painstaking explanation and the repeated and varied illustration, becomes an advantage to the many.

2. Class teaching is a device to economise time and labour, and to utilise the forces which are found inseparable from a group; but *it does not sink the individual in the group*. Each must be as well cared for as though the instruction was to him alone. This is often overlooked. The class is addressed as a whole, and if there is a fair

amount of attention, the teacher is satisfied, which is a fatal mistake. The class must not be dealt with as a compound, but as made up of individuals. It must be dealt with as a skilful gardener deals with his garden, where each plant has the culture it needs, to the manifest advantage of the whole.

3. To succeed in this course its nature must be clear. A teacher must fully understand his work. He has to teach. This is a brief phrase, but it is full of meaning. At present we shall indicate but one or two of its bearings.

(*a*) **To teach is to enable the learner to do.**—It may be to work with the mind, as in arithmetic and grammar; or, with the hands, as in penmanship and drawing; or, with the voice and ear, as in reading and singing. Its aim is always to give power and skill. Hence a child is not taught when it can merely repeat something, but only when it can do something. The development of the pupil's faculties and their discipline, that is, the placing them completely under his control, are the prime aims in teaching. Teaching does not do the work for the pupil. It provides work, opens out ways of doing it, and presents proper inducements to the pupil to address himself to it. An artisan does not do the work for his apprentice; but he shows him how to do it, sees that it is done, and that it is done rightly.

(*b*) **To teach is to instruct.**—This is another aspect. To instruct is to build in the mind. This implies that the work is to be substantial and enduring. But it implies more. The figure is often misinterpreted. It is not building on, but building in. It is not only informing the mind, but forming it. It is a process which puts the pupil into intelligent possession, in a methodical and systematic way, of any subject he is learning. It does this so as to secure that the thing learned is intelligently understood. But it extends

even beyond this. Instruction makes the matter to become, as it were, a part of the pupil's mind. It is not so much laid up in his memory, to be set forth in detail when asked for, as it is made part of himself so as to furnish all that he requires in any mental work he has to do. This difference between building on the mind, that is, putting things into the memory, and building in the mind, so as to incorporate what is given with the mind itself, should be clearly grasped. The former may be verbal only. The latter puts knowledge into the mind so that when needed it reappears with the stamp of the mind upon it, having an aspect of originality. We find illustrations in the facts of our personal history, or in things that have occurred again and again in our experience. We cannot put our hands on the first experience of such things as we can on those in memory. For instance, that fire burns, boiling water scalds, are facts not properly remembered; they are known. It thus appears that instructing is the process of informing the mind in such a way as to form it into an intelligent, thoughtful and active agent.

There are, so called, *modes* of instruction by which the mind is filled, not formed; in which it is simply a receptacle, not an active agent. But children's heads are not hollow spheres to be crammed. They are filled with brains that have to be moulded and invigorated by proper exercise. He is the best instructor, not who fills the head in the shortest time, but who gives greatest power in that time. It thus appears that while it is very important what we teach, it is much more so how we teach.

(*c*) **To teach is to form mental habits.**—A habit is an unconscious possession. Mental habits are such as imply the doing of mental work without any consciousness of the process. The mind is occupied with the thing to be done, and is not disturbed in the process by thinking how it is to be done. Illustrations are at hand in reading, pen-

manship, and early arithmetic. First lessons in these impose much toil on the teacher, and require much drill and very irksome labour from the learner. The progress is slow, because the mind is occupied with the mode as well as with the thing. But at length comes facility. This is due to habit. The teacher, to form such habits, has to see that the exercise is often repeated, that it is of sufficient length, and that it is so long continued, as at length to be performed with accuracy and rapidity almost without a thought.

(*d*) **To teach is to secure learning.**—Learning is the act of the pupil. It denotes that habit of attention, application, and diligence by which he does what belongs to him, under teaching or instruction; or in those silent exercises in which he has to use without aid his acquired power. To teach in this aspect is to place the pupil's work before him in an attractive way, to lead him by right methods, and to keep up his interest by a judicious use of questioning, challenging, and illustration—which are the teacher's tools.

Our subject will require attention to all things necessary to make class teaching efficient, exclusive of such as belong to the arrangement of the room, and the general management of the school. Its further prosecution will embrace the teacher, the method and subjects of instruction, and the pupil. In treating these there will be of necessity some repetition, the matters being so interwoven that a cross division is unavoidable.

## CHAPTER II.

## THE TEACHER.

1. **Manner.**—'Manners maketh man.' This is the motto of one of our oldest and most celebrated schools. It has a lesson for the teacher. He is what his manner is. If he is listless, aimless, and indifferent himself, then his children are listless, aimless, and indifferent also; but if he is earnest, devoted, and determined, they become so too.

(*a*) **Reality.**—Manner is the carriage, personal bearing, or mode of action characteristic of a person. It is the outward rendering of the man. Sometimes there is an assumed manner, but it never deceives, as it is impossible entirely to cloke that which is real. 'No one can be a good teacher,' says one of the Ancients, 'who is not himself good.' He means that it is impossible to assume and sustain the external accessories of good teaching when those things of which they should be the outcome do not exist.

(*b*) **Earnestness.**—A good manner is marked by *earnestness*. There is a real desire to benefit our pupils, to do our work well, and to influence for good those who are addressed. Earnestness is marked by geniality and pleasantness. These throw sunshine over the face, which is reflected on the class, or rather, they may be said to be rays of light issuing from the spirit within, and refreshing all on whom they fall. The face of such a one is known by its smile.

Its muscles have a tendency to relax rather than to become rigid. A good manner is marked by the use of the eye. This is comprehensive. No one is overlooked. Each pupil feels it. It is as readily attracted by the dull as by the bright. Every one feels that it cannot be deceived, that there can be no concealment, no tricks undiscovered, no underhand communication, or sleight of hand unobserved. Such an eye has power. It speaks praise or blame, approval or censure. It is quick to express feeling and thought, and to recognise them in the pupil. A good manner is marked by decision, firmness, and confidence. It is rather positive than suppliant. It has all such qualities as exclude feebleness, timidity, nervousness, and petulance. It is a manner that inspires confidence as well as exhibits it.

(*c*) **Self-control.**—As manner is the external index of mind, we should note that a good manner is impossible without *self-control.* The little things that tend to ruffle the spirit and to try the temper do not disturb it. If it is necessary to retrace the steps in order to make clear to some, what others have taken in, its owner does so without betraying annoyance. He does not act as though these things were not foreseen. He has also that degree of confidence in himself, which enables him to do his work with ease. At the same time he is not self-conscious. Self-consciousness is destructive of a good manner. For it implies that our mind is on ourselves, our modes of action, or on the impression we are making on others; whereas, a good manner implies that the mind is absorbed in its work. Any one thinking of himself and of his mode of doing a thing will inevitably be affected; just as one who lays down for himself certain rules is sure to become artificial if he thinks of these rules rather than of what he is doing; or as a lady who was thinking of her mode of walking would be sure to walk ungracefully. Not that certain concomitants of a good manner are not to be cultivated, where they

are not. These are to be sought, but at the right time and in the right way. But we contend for two points. First, manner must be *natural*, that is, it must be spontaneous. It is only as it reflects the spirit within that it can be effective. Hence the prime thing is to foster those qualities of mind which shine through a good manner. Second, to have a manner in which there is nothing artificial, there must be no thinking of rules, or of the mode of doing, or conscious imitation of the tones, bearing, or gestures of another; but the mind must be absorbed in the work in hand.

(*d*) **Gesture.**—A good manner will be marked by *appropriate action.* In a natural manner there is gesticulation. It is impossible to be under the influence of feeling without emotional manifestation. Yet such gesticulation may be unbecoming. It is a part of our education to bring emotional expression under control. If then gestures are uncouth or awkward, boisterous or vehement, they would indicate that this part of education had not received attention. Yet it were better that there should be extravagant gesture than that there should be none; for the former may be toned down, while for the latter there is no compensation. It is better to be a living being than an automaton. Rules cannot be given for action, but two things may be noted. If gesture is natural, it will precede speech rather than follow it. For an emotion is struggling for expression, and it escapes in the gesture before it appears in speech. The other thing is, that the final cause of a good manner in teaching is, that the teaching shall have its full effect upon the class. Hence there should be no gestures that would draw attention to the teacher rather than aid his efforts.

(*e*) **Mannerism.**—For the same reason *he should avoid mannerisms.* He must not be stiff, as though his muscles were as rigid as bone, or as though he was afraid of his

dignity. He should not stand on one foot with the other crossing it and resting on the toes. He ought not to place his arms a-kimbo, nor à-la-Napoléon, nor have his hands clasped behind. He has to avoid all that would divert attention to himself, or that would awaken the sense of the ludicrous in his children.

2. **Speech.**—(*a*) **Voice.**—*The teacher must cultivate his voice.* He should have it under control so as to be able to set it at the right pitch, and to confine it within the area of his class. The following things are essential:—He must be distinct. He must be heard. He must be followed. He must not annoy or disturb others.

**Distinctness.**—He must be *distinct.* That he may be so, his speech must be clear and forcible. This is necessary, otherwise he will not be impressive, for much that he says will be lost, and the children will exhaust their attention and patience in trying to catch what he says. There is nothing so opposed to efficiency, where the matter itself is clear, as imposing the task of gathering up what is being indistinctly uttered. The teacher's distinctness too will be reflected in his class. Children are unconsciously imitators of their teacher, and when he is distinct they become so too. This fact is often noticed in Practising schools, the children being found to vary in their speech according to their teacher.

**Loudness.**—The teacher must be *heard.* He must be loud enough to reach the furthest pupil. In order to do this, he must pitch his voice in its natural key, and he must not eat his words, mumble, or speak in his throat. He must not be loud. He must not shout, bawl, or scream. He must accommodate his voice in strength and pitch to the size and position of his class. An overstrained voice is exhausting to the teacher and disagreeable to his pupils.

**Apprehension.**—The teacher must *be followed.* Hence his speech must not be too fast nor too slow. In either case he makes a demand on the memory, the result being that the attention gives way. In the first case the pupil may utterly fail to gather all that is said; and in the second he may fail to connect what has been said. The young teacher whose speech is too slow has missed his vocation. For to speak in a heavy, sleepy, drawling way, implies either careless indifference, or the possession of a temperament that is utterly unsuited for teaching. But sometimes there is a tendency to slowness in the effort to be deliberate. Here there is a mistake. Speech is not made deliberate by a pause between successive words, but by the pauses requisite for intelligent delivery being duly made. The danger with most teachers is in speaking too fast, especially when earnestness is a marked feature of their character. The only remedy is to form the habit in common conversation of speaking in an easy natural way.

**Control.**—The teacher must not *annoy or disturb others.* He will succeed in avoiding these faults, if he is successful in getting that control of his voice which the above qualifications require from him.

(*b*). **Language.**—The teacher must give heed to his language. He must understand its value. It is his great instrument for moulding his pupils—as important for moral training as for intellectual culture. He who has a good stock can set forth his meaning better than one with a scantier store. It should ever be an aim of the teacher to extend his acquaintance with words and their significations. If he has language at command, if his words are significant to himself, then he will be more likely to reach many minds. It is not fluency that is now recommended, but a large acquaintance with words. Fluency is compatible with real poverty of words as well as of thought. Fluency may be a

great evil. Brevity is the soul of wit, and is also at times an excellent quality in teaching. No more words should be used than are necessary to express the meaning, which is often lost in the cloud of words. Many heap up words until the subject lies hopelessly hidden. Talk then prevents work. It imposes a task to get at the meaning, which the children refuse. It must be remembered that the discipline is in what is done, not in what is heard.

**Simplicity.**—The teacher must use *simple and colloquial language.* He must resist the temptation of using imported words, when he has the means of expressing himself better, or as well, in simple English. He must avoid the contemptible practice of using big words, as though it were his purpose to wrap up his meaning in sound, and thus to impress his class with a notion of his profundity and greatness. He ought not to call simple things by very fine names. He must not seem to wish to appear learned. Nothing is a better indication of culture than the use of good English. Yet he must not carry this rule of simple speech too far. The best rule is, to use that language which best conveys his thought. In doing so he will necessarily use sometimes words that are not in the speech of his pupils; and so far he may not exactly convey his thought to them. But the danger is little, and will disappear, if he makes it his practice to accept answers which show that his meaning has been fairly caught, rather than to force a mode of speech on them, which has to them no reality.

**Stereotyped phrases.**—The teacher should avoid *set phrases.* They come to have no meaning for himself, and they hinder his children. They are like theological terms used from the pulpit, which have in themselves great significance, but which have utterly lost their power to move either preacher or people. On the other hand, a class accustomed to such phrases often becomes impenetrable

by other modes. 'Allow me to put that question,' said a teacher to an inspector. 'No,' was the wise reply. 'You disguise from yourself the state of your class. You will not be always with it.'

**Provincialisms.**—The teacher must guard himself against *provincialisms*. His ability to do so will depend on his opportunities of conversing with men of culture, and on the use he makes of what he hears from the pulpit or the platform. If his intercourse with others accustoms him to erroneous modes of pronunciation and speech, he will be in danger of setting up these as standards, and considering others to be wrong who differ from him. Help in curing provincialisms has been found in certain Training Colleges by the use of a little book called the 'Manual of English Pronunciation.'

3. **Spirit.**—Success in class teaching, as in other parts of his work, will be promoted by the spirit in which it is carried on. He must have *sympathy* with children. He must be able to look on things with their eyes and feelings. He must have power to enter into their thoughts, and to share in their joys and sorrows. He must be *considerate*. Where sympathy exists, consideration will not be missing. He will not expect from them more than they can do. He will not set up a standard of attainment which it is impossible for them to reach. He will not deal with shortcomings as though they were things that he could not expect. If his children were perfect in their attainments, they would not be in his class. Their presence there implies imperfection and need. He must be *patient*. Patience will be needed towards those whose conduct tends to disturb the class. It will be especially needed when teaching those who are slow to learn. For these he must go over the same ground again and again, until it is theirs. 'Why did you illustrate that topic so often?' said one to an eminent preacher. 'Because

I saw a poor man in the gallery who did not apprehend it,' was the reply. The teacher must do the like. He must persist through all discouragements. He must exercise forbearance towards the dull and stupid—especially as he himself never belonged to that class. He must be *painstaking*. It is not genius or ability that is the secret of success. A painstaking teacher often secures better results than a brilliant one. But there will be no painstaking in any thing of which a low opinion is held. A proper estimate of his work and a just appreciation of children's claims are necessary. Painstaking is infectious; the children imbibe the spirit and copy the example: and a painstaking scholar always succeeds. He must be *gentle*. Perfect courtesy should be displayed while teaching. This is compatible with firmness, strength, and energy. Gentle speech does not mean a namby-pamby mode of dealing, but it excludes rudeness, roughness, and coarseness. It was said of one, 'He had such a gentle mode of reproving their faults, that they were not so much afraid as ashamed to repeat them.' He must be *hopeful*. Few things so sustain a teacher as hope. It is also one of the strongest incentives to exertion. His experience will ultimately furnish its warrant.

4. **Tact.**—Some possess a peculiar skill in adapting themselves to the circumstances in which they are placed, and in the dexterous management of persons and things. This is tact. It involves quick apprehension, great versatility and readiness of resource, guided by common sense and prudence. In class teaching there is constant demand for it. The teacher must be quick to see the meaning of an answer, and to gather from it the state of his pupil's mind; otherwise, he may become an object of contempt by his obtuseness. Besides, his work is varied, and the children differ in ability; their needs are many, and their difficulties diverse, so that versatility, or the power of adapting himself

to each new phase, and readiness of resource in supplying what is needed, are absolutely essential. Common sense is also required. It is the power to think, say, or do, the right thing at the right time and in the right way. Tact is shown in the *management of the class*;—in the mode of appeal, in the credit given to effort, in the right use of praise or blame, and in the treatment of the dull, the diffident, the forward, the indolent, and the quick. Especially is tact required in the display of authority. Constant demands are made for obedience, as in questioning, allotting work, drill exercises, and in many other ways. The mode of requiring these things should not irritate. True tact will avoid rough words and a rough manner, which assume that the children intend to do wrong, or that they are disposed to resist. Of course he must be *firm*. He must be rigid, not lax, not bending to whim or caprice, or yielding to the importunities of his children. He must be *impartial*, for he must be *just*. He must seek co-operation, hence he must sink self. It must be seen that obedience is not personal to himself, but is rendered to law, and is for the benefit of all. Tact is impossible if there is not self-control.

## CHAPTER III.

### METHOD OF INSTRUCTION: AIMS AND MEANS.

1. **Attention.**—The prime necessity in learning is attention. This is that attitude of the mind in which there is an effort to master, or know, what is before it. It is a state of mind rather than a faculty, and its essential element is that of making a voluntary effort. It is manifested sometimes by looking outwards, as when the senses are employed; then it is often called observation. At other times, it is exercised in recalling former ideas, and then it is recollection. At other times, it is employed in the contemplation of ideas, recalled or received, and then it is termed reflection. This attitude of mind may be assumed from intense interest, often a passing phase observable in young children; or from a desire to know, which may be a passing or a permanent state; or from a sense of duty; or it may be adopted to escape some unpleasant consequences.

(*a*) **New subjects.**—Attention is sometimes difficult in subjects which are altogether new. At first these excite a momentary interest, but this disappears when there is nothing in the mind by which to explain what is said. There is consequently a greater effort required to take it in, understand, and retain it. This effort is made by aid of the brain, which becomes wearied under the strain—a state similar to that of any other bodily organ, as, for instance, the muscles of the hand, when relief is sought by simply loosing hold. In

teaching a new subject, then, three things must be observed: First, it must grow out of something already known. Thus, in the first steps in arithmetic objects should be grouped before figures are taught or abstract numbers employed. Also, in grammar, the children should be accustomed when reading to have their attention drawn to sentences and their parts, to clauses, phrases, and words, and to their power in modifying the subject before the more abstract course is entered upon. Again, first lessons in a new subject should be *short*. As the brain occupied with what is new soon gets fatigued, and as then it cannot be brought to exert itself without hazard—hazard to present clearness or to future power—there must not be any strain upon it. Such lessons also should embrace but one or two points, which should be presented in such a way that they will be clear, and so often, that they will be familiar.

(*b*) **Difficult matter.**—Attention is difficult when a subject is *so presented as to require great effort to understand it.* The difficulty may be in the pupil. The earlier points may not have been clear, or they may not have been familiar. He has lost them because his learning was not thorough. He becomes disheartened, and he does not attend. Sometimes the difficulty is with the teacher. His method is at fault. He does not think clearly; or, though he knows his subject itself, he does not know it in relation to his pupils. Hence he blunders, he takes a wrong course, and his path is hidden from his class; or his strides are too wide, and they cannot keep up with him.

(*c*) **Wearisome repetition.**—Attention is difficult *when the subject is familiar*, and nothing new is offered. Teachers, in their anxiety to be thorough, sometimes overshoot the mark. They go over, again and again, ground that has been well trodden. The pupils, finding that they know the whole road, cease to attend. So they form habits

of listening without working; there is the semblance of attention, not the reality.

2. **Desire to know.**—The state of mind to which the teacher has to train his pupils is an intense love of knowledge and desire for it. If these are achieved, if he has so fostered the desire to know that it has become a habit, then he has accomplished one of the chief ends of instruction. If he excites this desire, attention will be given. He must not expect to find it full-blown in every child. The germs indeed exist. These are curiosity and the pleasure felt in the proper exercise of mental powers. Let him work rightly with these, and he will secure the desire, but he must keep before himself that he has still to cultivate it. 'How shall I beget in my class a strong desire to master this? How shall I get them to long for knowledge?' He must remember that it is a good rule in teaching never to answer a question before it is asked. He must bring his pupils to feel their need. He must so treat his subject that they shall be eager to know. Then he must take care how he satisfies their desire. Their craving must be met. But he must so do it, that to the pleasure of *knowing* there may be added that of *doing*. It must be their own, not because given to them, but got by them.

3. **Preparation.**—To accomplish these things, his lesson must be well prepared. The first rule is to have a distinct purpose in each lesson. The teacher must set before his own mind what he intends to attempt, so that he may form his plan, select his material, and fix the boundaries of his lesson. Having fixed his purpose, he must next see that he has a thorough acquaintance with his subject. He has to teach it; therefore he ought to know it, so as to select what his class needs, and so as to meet any want, illustrate any difficulty, or supply any information. This secured, he must proceed to *fix the plan* of his lesson.

As each lesson forms one of a series, it should be so introduced as to connect the new lesson with the former. The mode of doing this should prepare the way for the new topic, should fix attention on it, and create interest in it. The matter of the lesson should be carefully arranged. It should not be in a jumble, but on a clear plan, and all the facts in their due order and relations. The divisions should be distinct, neat, and simple; and their order natural, logical, obvious, and graduated. The preparation of the lesson must include a variety of other things. The matter must be good, demanding an effort and worth it. The information, whether of fact, opinion, or rule, should be clear and accurate. There should also be explanations of things that are difficult or obscure, which may be given either verbally or by the supply of collateral information. There should also be carefully prepared illustrations—objects, diagrams, models, experiments, analogies, and instances. The purpose of these should be clear, whether to set forth a fact, remove obscurity, overcome a difficulty, meet the needs of pupils, make the matter more familiar, or impress it more deeply. There should be description for the purpose of setting forth vividly clear and distinct ideas.

4. **Delivery of lesson.**—In giving his lesson the teacher must secure activity of mind, and the thorough reception by his class of what he offers it. These conditions depend on the development of the lesson, the due mixture of questioning and exposition, and the attention given to answers.

(*a*) **Development of lesson.**—In the development of the lesson it must be seen that the subject is so set forth as to fix attention and excite interest. In some lessons of information a broad outline should be sketched before filling in the details. This is advisable, as there is a tendency to an exhaustive treatment of every part, and thus the danger

incurred of the lesson not being completed. In most lessons, each point should be put as a problem the class has to solve, or a question, the answer to which they have to find. In a few subjects the teacher may set the points forth as propositions, which he proceeds to illustrate and prove. Each thing must be made familiar. The teacher must not pass on to a fresh point till he is sure that his pupils are ready to follow; but he need not linger after he finds that they have got what he offers. All the parts of the lesson must be dovetailed, so as to form a whole in the pupils' minds. This will require judicious repetition and thorough recapitulation.

(*b*) **Interrogation.** — *Good questioning is essential.* Without it the teacher does not know what his pupils know, what they receive, or what they understand. Questioning should stimulate the learner and excite the effort to think, it should direct the effort into the right channel, and it should help children to express in suitable language what they learn. Questioning has received a distinct name according to its office. *Tentative* questioning is employed at the introduction of a topic in order to discover what is known. It also makes apparent to the children their needs, and prepares them to receive. *Catechetical* questioning has for its office the making children understand. It is a kind of cross-questioning after an exhaustive fashion, in which the teacher and pupil find how far a thing is not understood; and in which the questions are so ordered as to place matters clearly, and get that activity of mind by which the subject will be thoroughly apprehended. It is the most effective of the teacher's gifts. *Socratic* questioning has for its office the development of some subject in the mind of the pupil as the result of a series of inferences from something that he already knows. It starts with a question which the pupil cannot answer, and then leads him step by step from some known fact till he discovers the answer for himself. *Ex-*

*amination* questioning comes in at the end of a lesson, to bring out its broad features and most essential parts, and to bind these together as a whole. A good rule in all questioning is, to vary the forms, so that the child may attend to the sense rather than to the words.

(*c*) **Exposition.**—*Exposition* is the complement of questioning. Some things must be told. There are facts, which, if not known, no questioning can reveal; and there are ideas which the child might discover, but which would not repay the labour. Hence there will always be a demand for instances, explanations, descriptions, and analogies. In these there may be sometimes lengthened statement, the aim being to give power of attention, of following what is said, and of retaining it. But this practice ought to be joined to that of requiring the reproduction of the statement either orally or on paper. As a rule, a stream of talk must not be indulged in. The old comparison of a child's mind to a narrow-necked phial should be remembered. Poured in drop by drop, little by little, it may be filled, when a continued stream would run to waste.

(*d*) **Answers.**—*Answers* form an important element of the teaching process. In all the chief matters they should be full. This may seem to retard the lesson, but the discipline will be more thorough, and ultimately nothing will be lost. There is great advantage to the pupil in a full reply. Often the effort to put a thought into words is a better discipline than to get the thought. It also makes the matter more completely the pupil's own, for the effort to express what he has been taught gives him a clearer and a firmer hold of it. The full answer shows, too, to the teacher whether he has succeeded, and how far additional help is needed. Guess answers must be forbidden. A guess is a lie. The pupil must never appear to know that of which he is consciously ignorant. Hasty answers

must be treated so as to prevent their recurrence. Wrong answers must not be put aside. They may only be wrong in expression, or they may be legitimate inferences from something heard before. Trace what seems a silly reply to its source. It may be a blunder, but it is more likely to spring from some wrong association. Children, as a rule, do not intend to make silly replies. Let answers be precise. That which is inexact is comparatively worthless.

(*e*) **Cram.**—The teacher must attend to his *speed*. No teacher can advance faster than his pupil can follow. But there may seem to be progress when there is not. This happens when he judges of his lesson by the number of things in it, and not by his thorough teaching and discipline. Cram is vicious. It is as baneful to the mind as gluttony and indigested food are to the body. True teaching is slow. The practice of fully mastering every step cannot be otherwise, but at length it gives sure results. When one of our most distinguished judges was asked how he had gained such vast and accurate attainments, he replied, that at college he worked slowly to let nothing pass until he had made it his own; that many of his fellow students passed over more pages in a day than he did in a week, but at the end of the year he had more at his command than they had at theirs. This was the result of slow, thoughtful, and thorough work. Yet this must not be carried too far. It must not be an excuse for a dilatory habit. The mistake of those who keep children in a standard of which they can do all the work, must not be imitated. There must be advance; and that there may be, there must be sufficient work.

## CHAPTER IV.

### METHOD OF INSTRUCTION: CLASS SUBJECTS.

**Methods differ.**—Method is determined to a great extent by the subject. This is so because of the general purpose of making each subject intelligible, and of so teaching it as to discipline the mind. For each subject has its own class of facts and its own educative power. It is true that in all early instruction one general principle holds, namely, that the mind must be filled with the facts of the subject, before it can engage on that systematic or scientific course by which its principles or laws become revealed. It is also true that all real instruction aims at putting these facts into the mind, and then at using them to train the mind in thoughtful habits. But it is this principle which makes necessary a variety of method. Take the three typical subjects, Geography, History, and Grammar: their facts are not obtained in the same way. Some of those of geography were gained by observation, and others, as the shape and motions of the earth, by inferences founded on observations. Those of history come to us through testimony, and enter into our conceptions through descriptions, and by the aid of analogies drawn from our every day life. Those of grammar come through hearing, reading, and speech, and the interpretation put by the mind on verbal signs. Hence it follows that the method in the early stages of these subjects must vary, if the facts are to be acquired in an educative way. The same holds true in the later stages. For the modes of discovering under a multiplicity of facts their identifying principle, of classifying the facts, and

making generalisations from them, must be influenced by the process of obtaining them. This being so, nothing can be worse in the interests of true education than the common practice of putting small cram books into the hands of children, that they may have on their lips, facts, dates, and names, in order to pass in an examination. This unworthy practice is in such favour, that one of its promoters boasts that he sells millions yearly of his trashy epitomes. Surely they who use such books forget that schools do not exist for the mercenary interests of the teacher. They should realise that the school and teachers are maintained for the sole purpose of educating the children well. It is disgraceful to sacrifice the interests of the children to the teacher's profit, or it may be to his indolence.

1. **Geography**, rightly taught, becomes early an educational instrument. Its educative power, at any stage, depends on the facts with which it deals being intelligently known. There can be no education by it, where it is a mere summary of names, definitions, generalisations, and facts. The facts must be acquired in the right ways.

(*a*) **Observation.**—The foundation must be laid on observation. In early life the senses are active, and things, obtained by their aid, are stored in the mind as ideas. Ideas united to language are more completely at the command of memory. First lessons in geography should combine observation and description. The neighbourhood of the school should furnish the material for them. Facts abound in every locality. Some neighbourhoods, it is true, are better furnished than others, but one who knows how to use his senses will find appropriate facts in all. Even a large city offers them in the fall of rain on its roofs, the flow of water in its gutters, the direction of shadows at different times of the day; in the clothing and trades of its people, and in similar things. In other places, ideas of hills, valleys, plains, streams, peoples,

and employments may all be obtained by observation intelligently directed and thoughtfully utilised. An advance on this would be by a judicious use of *clay models*. Let the teacher get a large flat board, and on this model out in clay, first the district, then the home county, then such places as the Isle of Wight, and he will find himself able to convey, intelligently, ideas of all the more important facts, and to point out some of their relations.

(*b*) **Description.**—At every stage there must be vivid description. Observation rightly used makes description a reality. It is as the teacher's description employs the ideas the children have thus acquired, that the new facts become realities. Description is necessary also that the scenes may be associated with language; then, as Pillans says of intelligence in reading, there is a twofold force in the facts; while at the same time language also tends to their permanent retention, and to their being at command. The teacher will do well to go to places, say a hill-side, and make notes of what he observes, and import these into his descriptions—a practice that comes recommended to us by the example of Sir Walter Scott. Should he live in a hilly district, when there has been a heavy downpour of rain, let him, while the streams are yet full, go amongst the hills and note minutely all that is there. In like manner when he goes to some new scene, let him enter in his note-book minute descriptions of what he sees. In early lessons the teacher must not attempt too much. The facts can be imprinted only by much repetition. But this permanence cannot be obtained if the facts in the lesson are many. In dealing with facts there must not be, at first, attention to minute differences. For instance, in a lesson on Bays, by aid of a clay model of Cornwall and Devon, it would not be wise to take up the points of dissimilarity, but those in which they all agree, with just a reference to their difference in size.

(*c*) **Induction.**—As the lessons advance, more must be attempted. When the mind has ideas, relations between the facts may be noted. Little inferences may be attempted, as the direction of rivers by the contour of the country. As the facts accumulate and the intelligence strengthens, there may be efforts at classification of the facts and generalisations from them. At length the facts which the pupils possess may serve to illustrate general laws. But there must not be haste. Processes that imply a grasp of many facts and of reasoning from them are not available with children. But with such facts as they can infer, such laws as they can discover, they should be trained to make the effort. How some coasts are broken, others not; how some rivers have their sources near, yet take widely divergent courses; how the rapidity of a river is affected by its fall, volume, and windings; how some parts are densely peopled, others sparsely—are the kind of facts on which children may be trained to think.

2. **History** in some of its aspects lies outside of the possibilities of an elementary school. Yet the foundation should be laid there for its subsequent profitable study. It has for its subject human nature in certain phases of thought, purpose, action, and combination; which, rightly treated, may be productive of benefit that no other subject could secure. But all will depend on the choice of topics and the mode of treatment. We must condemn at once the practice of giving a skeleton of bones, held together by a verbal string, and calling it history. Bacon says, 'As for the corruptions and moths of history, which are epitomes, the use of them deserveth to be banished, as all men of sound judgment hath confessed.' Knowledge is power when it can be applied, otherwise it is of no value. This ought to be a guide to the matter and method of history in schools. It should help to the development of the intellect, to the filling of the mind with fructifying truth, to the moral advance-

ment of the learner, to a feeling of thankfulness for much that we now possess, and to a condition in which the present shall be a seed-time of good in the future.

(*a*) **Advantages to the intellect.**—The least benefit of right teaching will be to the memory, to which it commits the care of many things more or less connected. A still higher culture is that which it offers to the conceptive faculty and to the imagination. History should be so taught as to fill the mind with pictures. The teacher should accustom himself to conceive its scenes vividly, and to describe them graphically. The material is in abundance. Individual men and classes of men, costumes, customs, dwellings, and actions are a few of the varieties. The dead past must in his hands become a present reality. As facts accumulate and the mind is stored, another step may be taken. The facts may be compared, weighed, reflected upon, and inferences drawn. This is a culture of the judgment, than which nothing can be better if rightly conducted. The facts have come on testimony. What testimony?—of observers, actors, or from hearsay? Is the testimony trustworthy? Have we all the facts? These and similar questions will suggest to the teacher that he should caution his children against hasty and rash judgments, in order that that they may be saved from false ones. He will have frequent opportunities of impressing upon them the duty of careful examination before forming a judgment. He must also bear in mind another point. Historical matters have come down to us mixed with personal opinions, or coloured by prepossessions. It thus becomes his business to discriminate, and to set free the facts from the opinions. He must not give opinions as history. He must guard against giving a bias to the mind. 'For,' as Bacon observes, 'it is the true office of history to represent the events themselves together with the counsels, and to leave the observations and conclusions thereupon to the

liberty and faculty of every man's judgment.' Further, history should be so taught, as to put not only food for reflection into the mind, but germs that will grow and spread. It offers the means of putting in that which shall be a living power, gathering, appropriating, and assimilating. No other subject, except religious teaching, is so well adapted to do this. Arithmetical rules and their applications give nothing for creative thought, and the same is more or less true of grammar and geography. But history, rightly taught, implants germs which have a constant force of accretion in all following years.

(*b*) **Moral benefit.**—The moral aspect of the subject should never be absent from the teacher's mind. Dealing with human actions, and drawing pictures in which Man always occupies the foreground, it is impossible to teach it rightly without calling forth emotions. How utilise them? Not by a formal moral lesson; that will quench them. The utmost that may be allowed is a pithy remark, dropped at the right moment, so that it may be incorporated with the picture. A right treatment will instil a principle, and the right word clench it, without any formal statement. For instance, a lesson on 'Towton' might leave a very deep impression of the scene and its incidents in the imagination, associated with strong feelings of horror and commiseration, and of great thankfulness that such a fight is now impossible in England.

(*c*) **Selection of topics.**—It is a matter of necessity that right topics should be selected. History presents much beyond children's powers, because outside of their sympathy, experience and attainment. That its teaching may have due force, the topics must agree with the conditions of their intelligence. They can interpret the past only by what they know; hence if they are to receive real benefit, they must have such a knowledge of the present as will enable them to

realise the past, and to profit by it. The early lessons should be based on incidents which are apparently isolated. They will thus follow the great law by which God orders the growth of all early intelligence. The purpose of such lessons would be to prepare the pupils to understand a more systematic course.

(i) **First step.**—The first lessons will begin with Home and Now. The home and its surroundings will furnish topics by which the past may be better realised. How people now live; their condition, employments, clothing, and dwellings; their food, and how provided; the means of satisfying all the needs of large towns—taking the nearest one; things cultivated in gardens and in fields, and those supplied by other lands; the first introduction of some things, e.g., the potato; a table now at dinner time and a similar one 400 years ago; roads, modes of conveyance, freedom, and facility of travelling:—these and similar topics would prepare the pupils for lessons on the past.

(ii) **Second stage.**—Another step would be to trace back from the present one or two of such lines. Take modes of travelling:—A map of England in 1830, and one now containing the great railway trunks and their more important branches; and the large numbers daily travelling on these lines; then a picture of roads and travelling seventy years since, the stage coach, its few passengers and its guard; then, still further back, roads and conveyances 300 years ago, and the little travelling. Another line might be, the condition of labourers now, in their homes, food, fuel, clothing, liberty, and instruction; and pictures of these in the near and in the far past. Let the children realise, for instance, how many comforts and advantages even the very poor now have which Alfred could not command. Besides facts like these, the district and the county will furnish its pictures. Even village names will supply them to those who know how

to use them. For instance, in the place where this is being written, there is the 'ham' in the middle, and the 'ceorl ton' on one side, and the 'swine ton' on the other. What a picture is here! Then what pictures could be formed in connection with the manor court, county court, old halls, and old ruins! It should be an aim of the teacher thus to people the neighbourhood of the school with a living past.

(iii) **Third course.**—Such courses of lessons should be followed by one beginning with the reign of Queen Victoria. In this there should be attempted the conception of an Empire on which the sun never sets. Then such things in the reign as come within the grasp of the pupils. The penny post and the enormous correspondence it has created. The Irish famine, the corn law agitation, free trade, and the growth of material prosperity. How far modern legislation is to be charged with making us a mercenary people. How far it explains tricks of trade, inferior workmanship, false quantities, and those other things which are now lowering the English name in the markets of the world. Railways, telegraph lines, and the many inventions of this period. The education movement and the large extent to which it had spread by voluntary effort, before it received aid from Government. These and such like things are those in which the children should receive instruction. Then they should be taken to the period immediately preceding, say from the Peace to the accession of Queen Victoria, and so on backwards, until we are satisfied that the children are in a condition to have a book put into their hands, in which they may trace the nation's growth from the distant past.

3. **Grammar.**—We take our final illustration from grammar, of the principle that method must differ according to the subject. This deals with sentences and words as

setting forth mental states and operations. Its matter thus consists of abstract signs, and the mental states which these represent form part of what is called the logical faculty. Grammar offers the lower, or rather the outside region, in which this faculty works. The various operations conducted by it are, amongst others, analysis, comparison, selection, abstraction, and judgment. Viewed educationally, grammar has thus something in common with arithmetic, but differs from it, in its matter being less exact. It differs further in requiring a larger accumulation of material before it can be made the subject of profitable study. But this accumulation has been going on from the first moment that sentences fell on the child's ear, or arrested its attention. How will this affect the process of its further instruction? Does it warrant the common plan of beginning with words? Now it may be conceded, that the child may be taught to select words from its stores and to group them as nouns, verbs, and adjectives. But to do this, it must have a definition, or its equivalent, to guide the selection. This, however, implies the possession of grammatical knowledge, for a definition sums up what was before known. This is a false method. Grammar should be learnt inductively. Its facts and laws should be discovered. For instance, the power of words should be gathered from sentences, and the learner group or classify them according to their offices. Besides, to begin with words is as absurd as it would be in arithmetic to begin with fractions, for a sentence is the unit of speech. To this add, that some of the facts are absolutely unintelligible until sentences are understood.

(*a*) **Reading lesson.**—In the adoption of a course of grammatical instruction there should be some regard to the length of time the learner may stay at school. This may be altogether too short for anything like systematic study. But every child leaving school should have acquired the power of gathering from books all it reads, and some

ability in the right use of speech. These may be secured by so treating the reading lessons, that the main facts with which grammar deals may be obtained. A portion of time should be set apart for examination and exposition of what is read. A judicious mode of questioning will bring out the relations of subject, predicate, and adjuncts; will direct to the variations in the forms of words, and the relations so expressed; and will bring out the forces of words themselves. This followed up daily, the children would be led gradually, by an almost unconscious induction, to discover principles, and to classify, generalise, and form rules for themselves.

(*b*) **Oral lessons.**—Concurrently with this examination may be oral lessons with the aid of the black-board. Start with simple sentences, and gradually enlarge them until every variety has been dealt with. Do not write a sentence and deal with it; then another, and so on. But write a dozen sentences of like structure on the board, and let the children by examining and comparing, discover the main facts which happen to be the subject of the special lesson. For instance, let the first lesson be on sentences in their simplest form, as, fire burns, snow melts, rain falls, water flows. The first point will be that each sentence sets forth a different statement. The next step will be, to lead them to discover in each the parts that perform precisely the same office; and thus, step by step, to lead to a knowledge of a sentence, its essential elements, and the special force of the words employed. The thing to be guarded against is, introducing too soon such technical terms as subject, predicate, noun, and verb.

The principle on which such a course is founded is that common to all science. It implies that the facts of language are gathered, their relations ascertained, and then that the laws, principles, and rules underlying them are educed.

## CHAPTER V.

### THE CLASS.

**Class management.**—The proper management of the class is necessary to efficient instruction. The mind of the teacher must not be in his lesson so much as in his class. His lesson is a means, not an end. He has rather to instruct a class than to teach a subject. His test must be how far all benefit by his work. Now a class is not homogeneous. There is as great a variety in temperaments, abilities, and habits, as in faces. A teacher, to be successful, must know his class, and must treat it according to knowledge. There should be no guess-work in the management of it. The class is not a machine; but is composed of living beings, thinking and acting for themselves, each having distinct feelings and aims, and each requiring more or less of special treatment. Yet the aim of class work is unity of action. The class is to have one aim, and to be animated by one spirit. It is to be brought to seek the highest attainable perfection in its work. Hence, this will require in the teacher very considerable knowledge and skill, and the right use of certain means and devices by which the co-operation of the scholar is sought.

1. **Instincts.**—The teacher must lay the basis of his management in the instincts of the children. Instincts cannot be eradicated. The child's nature cannot be changed. Acting contrary to instincts will bring trouble, distress, and failure; acting through them, success. Amongst other

instincts there are those of action. These are, activity of body and mind, the tendency to seek employment, the pleasure in the intelligent use of the faculties, the gratification in obtaining knowledge, and especially in discovering it, and the instinct of power. Then again, there are the social tendencies ; manifested in quick sympathies of the children, in the zest with which they act in common, in their love of talk, in their desire to tell others what they know, and in their endeavours to engage others in what they themselves are doing. In these things there are great forces for good, to those who know how to use them. By their means may be obtained simultaneous action, energetic working, oneness of feeling, a high public opinion, emulation of the highest type, and the great result—community of benefit. In addition to these, there is the instinct of dependence, shown in their implicit trust, and in their confidence in what their teacher says. This also tends to the feeling of personal regard. In these things lie the teacher's power, which will be increased by his just and right treatment of his children.

2. **Varieties of character.**—Varieties of habit and character will present the greatest difficulty in class management. The teacher will find room for all the skill he can acquire in the right treatment of these varieties. He will have to deal with the quick and the slow, the bright and the dull ; with those whose memories are quick to take, and those who seem tardy because they must understand ; with the imaginative and with the matter-of-fact minds. He will also have to deal with inattention, idleness, indolence, and sluggishness ; and with the heedless, the careless, the indifferent and the slovenly. Some will give trouble by their loud, noisy, and boisterous ways ; others from their timidity, nervousness, and low speaking ; while he may have rude, pert, coarse, unruly, and sulky children. It is impossible to lay down special rules for these cases,

for, as Locke says, that which succeeds with one often fails with another, because the same condition is brought about by various means. What the teacher should do may be gathered from an analogous case. A skilled physician is one who joins to the general knowledge needed by him special study of individual cases. Let the teacher do the same. Let him bring to his work all the aptitude which professional study can give, and let him attentively study all the cases with which he has to deal. Yet a few instances of treatment may be suggested. A sharp lad, with a tendency to conceit, might have work assigned him in which failure was certain. He must not be praised for work done, but must be made to feel how little he can do. Patience is needed with the dull. An old proverb tells us that 'Patient kindness wins patient pains.' Forced idleness is sometimes the best cure for idleness. Rudeness, when it proceeds from ignorance, may be removed by instruction; when it is to give pain, or to draw attention, it may be cured by simply taking no notice. Silent contempt is often a certain cure of forward and pert ways.

3. **Attention.**—The devices to secure attention and to form a habit of work are, challenging, attention to answering, and the right use of praise. That the children may learn, they must give continuous attention, otherwise there is loss, and it may be utter failure. Hence the benefit of challenging. That is, requiring at any moment proof of present attention, and evidence that it has been constant. Starting from the last thing said, as many questions are put on previous work as the teacher finds necessary. But he must be discriminating. The boy whose mind is busy, grappling with something said, must not be mistaken for one whose wits are wool-gathering. Challenging is a good mode of recalling to duty. 'Jones, look this way,' not only diverts the attention to him, but puts in peril his obedience. But let the teacher put a question to the class, and call upon Jones to

reply, and follow this by other questions; then should he break down, the replies of others will appeal to his self-respect and sense of duty.

4. **Answering.**—The extent to which each takes part in a lesson is influenced by the mode of answering. The purpose is to get each to work all the time. This is best accomplished by individual answering. Not by questioning in succession, nor by random indiscriminate questioning, for this would result in inattention. Nor by taking the replies of such as are ready or forward, for then those who most need remain unnoticed. The teacher should have a clear plan, so that no one would be missed, yet no one know when he may be questioned. Questions should be addressed to the class, and the one to reply then indicated. This secures an effort from all, while it retains to the teacher the power of stimulating such as most need it. Holding up hands is a necessary device for many teachers, but it is one that tends to waste of time. Such also is the practice of saying 'More hands up.' The more rapid the answering and the more spirited the questioning, the more likely there is to be success. Simultaneous answering is effective in recapitulation.

5. **Praise.**—Praise and commendation evincing sympathy and approval, are good things in class teaching. The pupils are children. They have youthful sympathies, hopes, and fears. They have little experience. Their knowledge of right they acquire from the approval of those over them. They are stimulated by the approbation of those whom they regard. Hence commend, not niggardly, yet with discrimination. To do well, when it is easy to do well, does not deserve praise. Measure the work by the power to do it. Commend not only success, but effort. He who has wrought and failed may be more deserving than he who has succeeded.

6. **Moral forces.**—The moral forces at work in the class will demand constant care. The moral character is being imperceptibly formed by agencies that are always at work. Some of them are direct, others are indirect and silent. The teacher must be vigilant. Moral offences should not escape his eye, yet he must not act as if he constantly expected them. Acts of copying, or furtive looks at others' work must be dealt with, not only for the benefit of the culprit, but to establish a community of sentiment, a public opinion, which shall act as a safeguard. The individual offence must be treated in such a way as will put into the mind of all a moral principle, which shall prevent many similar faults.

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